



PRION VITTATUS, *Cuv.*

Broad-billed Prion.

Pachyptila vittata, Ill. Prod., p. 275.—Temm. Pl. Col., 528.

Procellaria vittata, Forst. Draw., No. 86.—Licht. Edit. of Forst. MSS., p. 21.—Gmel. Edit. Linn., vol. i. p. 560.

Procellaria Forsteri, Lath. Ind. Orn., vol. ii. p. 827.

Prion vittatus, Lacep. and Cuv.—G. R. Gray, List of Gen. of Birds, 2nd Edit., p. 99.—Gould in Annals and Mag. of Nat. Hist., vol. xiii. p. 366.

Broad-billed Petrel, Lath. Gen. Syn., vol. vi. p. 414.—Ib. Gen. Hist., vol. x. p. 195.

Pachyptila Forsteri, Swains. Class. of Birds, vol. ii. p. 374.—Less. Traité d'Orn., p. 613.

THIS, the largest species of *Prion* yet discovered, is very plentiful in the South Indian Ocean. I observed it on my outward passage to Van Diemen's Land, near the islands of Amsterdam and St. Paul's. I have never encountered it in the South Atlantic, although in all probability, like most of the other Petrels, it makes in the course of its peregrinations a circuit of the globe. The seas washing the coasts of Van Diemen's Land, New Zealand and the Auckland Islands, are the localities whence most of the specimens in our museums have been obtained.

It subsists entirely on mollusks and other marine animals which abound in the southern seas. The laminae of the bill are very conspicuous, and doubtless form some important function in the economy of the bird, but what particular purpose this appendage to the bill is intended to perform has not yet been ascertained. Its powers of flight and mode of life are very similar to those of the *Prion Turtur* and *P. Banksii*, as detailed in the description of those species. I believe that the sexes present little or no difference in size or plumage, but I have not had an opportunity of satisfactorily determining this point; had any existed, however, it is not likely that it would have escaped the notice of those ornithologists who have from time to time examined the members of this group.

All the upper surface delicate blue-grey; the edge of the shoulder, the scapularies, outer primaries and tips of the middle tail-feathers black; space surrounding the eye and the ear-coverts black; lores, line over the eye, and all the under surface white, stained with blue on the flanks and under tail-coverts; bill light blue, deepening into black on the sides of the nostrils and at the tip, and with a black line along the side of the under mandible; irides very dark brown; feet beautiful light blue.

The foremost figure in the Plate is about the natural size; the one in the distance is of course on a reduced scale.